

FIFTY-FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT.

(Continued from page 19)

pository in the southwest. Permission was granted, and the Secretary made a tour of inspection and selected Texarkana as a geographical center, from which supplies could be quickly sent to all points in the southwest where we have churches.

A modest beginning was made, and one floor was rented and a small, but select stock was installed in October, 1906, with Rev. W. L. Hickman in charge as manager. The enterprise was given a cordial and loyal support by our patrons in the southwest from the beginning, and the steady enlargement of the business has vindicated the wisdom of establishing this depository. It was soon necessary to rent a second floor to provide for the growth of the business, and our fixed rental charges soon reached \$1,800.00 per year.

Some three years ago it became apparent that still larger quarters were needed to accommodate the business and the question of investing in property of our own was agitated. The sale of our building in Richmond put in our hands a fund which was available for investment in some permanent form after erecting the handsome new building for the Home Office. An opportunity was presented for the purchase of a desirable corner lot in the center of the retail business district in Texarkana. The lot was purchased early in 1915, and plans were made for the erection of a three story building, 50x150 feet. Favorable contracts for the erection of the building were possible, owing to war conditions, and it was completed within the contract time, and at a reasonable cost. We now have one of the largest and most complete book stores west of the Mississippi River, and are in position to serve our people in the southwest in a more effective way than ever before.

The first floor which has a pitch of twenty feet is devoted exclusively to the use of our Committee. A mezzanine gallery was built to enlarge the storage space, and provide a mailing room, and all departments are, therefore, under close supervision of the manager. A handsome equipment for the retail section was installed, and the citizens of Texarkana regard the institution as a civic enterprise in which they have a pride and part, and they are giving it a most loyal support.

The second floor provides a number of officers and a lodge room, which have been rented to desirable tenants.

The third floor provides some eighteen offices for rent, and tenants have been secured for a part of the rental space; and when all offices are rented a revenue will be derived which should take care of the total investment in the plant.

The volume of business has grown from \$24,000.00 in 1907, to \$56,724.00 in 1916, and this without interrupting the steady enlargement of the business at the Richmond office.

The rapid development now under way in the southwest in population and material wealth is a challenge to our Church to keep pace with this growth. Our depository is prepared to make large contributions to the welfare of our churches and Sunday-schools, and the Assembly should appeal to our membership in this section to give the depository a loyal support.

Business Department Summary.

The summary of sales for the year is as follows:

Sale of books at Richmond	\$ 73,112 33
Sale of periodicals at Richmond	115,799 03
Total sales at Richmond	\$188,911 36
Sale of books at Texarkana	32,240 55
Sale of periodicals at Texarkana	24,483 88
Total sales at Texarkana	\$ 56,724 43

Total sales for the year

Net profit for the year

The Further Development of Our Book Department.

We now have two modern and thoroughly equipped buildings, costing \$175,000.00, both of which are a credit to our Church and fully paid for. We have an investment of about \$75,000.00 in books of our own issue and from the leading publishers of the world. We have an organization ready to serve the Church in a larger way than ever, and with the cooperation of our membership and the Church courts, we can make a large contribution to the growth and development of the whole Church. New lists of names have been secured from pastors and we now have on our files a fresh mailing list containing about 100,000 names. We regard this constituency, not as a field to be exploited, but as a great body of people to be served. The General Assembly of 1908 took the following specific action on the question of the responsibility for the contents of books sold in conducting a general book business:

"Under the rules and regulations of the Assembly governing the Executive Committee of Publication, it is instructed to do a general book business for the benefit of the Church and to publish such matter as the Assembly may place in its hands, and any other matter which comes within the scope of the Assembly's regulations. In order to render the best service to the Church it is necessary for the Executive Committee to conduct depositories, sell books of leading home and foreign publishers and to send to its patrons announcements of such publications.

"It has been repeatedly stated in advertising matter sent out by the Executive Committee, as well as in reports to the General Assembly that no responsibility is assumed for the contents or teachings of outside publications, other than those recommended as suitable for Sabbath-school libraries. In the past the Assembly has approved such reports, and hence endorsed this policy of the Executive Committee of Publication. The Assembly well knows the impossibility of the Committee or its officers personally examining new books, which come from the press at the rate of one every hour in the calendar day, to say nothing of the countless issues of the past. It would seem to be an invasion of the rights of individual judgment and conscience to say what books or periodicals the constituency of our Church should buy and read. The Assembly, therefore, commends the policy of the Publication Committee, and expresses confidence that the judgment and zeal of the committee and its officers will effectually prevent them from pressing the sale of books that would be hurtful to the interest of our Church."

We are keeping in mind the orders of the Assembly and are making an earnest effort to render the Church a service of increasing value and to this end we should have the loyal cooperation of every pastor of all the Church Courts. In other denominations, one question which ministers are annually asked is—"What was the total value of books you ordered from Church depositories during the past year?" We have no authority to ask such a question of our ministers, but the efficiency of our work would be greatly increased if they would from time to time call the attention of their people to the facilities of the Committee for furnishing helpful books and urge that all orders for such supplies be sent to one of the depositories.

The sales in the Book Department have grown from \$24,000.00 in 1902 to over \$100,000.00 in 1916. While this is a gratifying increase, we should be able to report book sales of fully \$200,000.00 to our 300,000 members. This goal can be reached if we are

given the support to which this great enterprise is entitled.

Benevolent Work.

We make it a fixed rule to grant all requests received for the donation of Sunday-school periodicals needed to establish a new mission Sunday-school for a period of three to six months, where local financial support is not immediately available. We also make liberal donations of libraries, books, Bibles and tracts where there is promise that the material will be wisely used. We have donated over 300 Sunday-school libraries to small schools during the past year. We have given 1,050 Bibles and 3,890 Testaments for the recitation of the Catechism, a gratifying evidence that there is a growing interest in the memorization of these great summaries of Bible truth. An interesting feature this year is the donation of over fifty Bibles through our missionaries in China, and of about 200 Bibles and Testaments through our missionaries in Korea. A special certificate in Korean has been printed by our Mission in that country which accompanies the presentation copies. Sunday-school papers were given to 312 schools during the year and of this number eighty-six were newly organized. Over 16,000 children receive here almost the only Christian influence that touches their lives. The total value of literature, books, Bibles, etc., donated during the year was \$17,564.99.

The following is the financial summary of our Benevolent Work for the past year:

Receipts for Extension Work.	
Received from 1,381 churches	\$ 18,355.37
Received from 1,349 Sunday-schools	16,520.09
Received from 378 church societies	1,916.40
Received from miscellaneous offerings	764.40
Total receipts for Extension Work	\$ 37,556.26

Expenditures for Extension Work.

Salaries and expenses of Field Workers	\$ 13,568.81
Institutes and Educational Work	2,603.88
Programs, envelopes, etc., for special collections ..	1,927.25
Expenses of Stewardship Committee and Woman's Auxiliary	944.56
Printing, express, postage and incidentals	3,253.81
Donation of books, Bibles and literature	17,564.99
Funds returned	269.02
Total expenditures for the year	\$ 40,132.32

The overdraft of \$2,576.00 was made good by our Business Department.

Work of Our Extension Department.

During the year we have had for whole or part time, thirty-one workers in the field, distributed in fourteen Synods and nineteen Presbyteries. We have reached territory hitherto untouched and the work has been highly fruitful in the direction of organizing new schools, improving methods in existing schools and in the number of conversions reported. It has been impossible to meet all the demands made upon us for workers in many fields, which would have yielded fruitful results, owing to lack of funds to pay salaries and expenses of workers.

For the enlargement of this important work, we should have a material increase in the Sunday-school Extension Fund. The Assembly of 1915 approved a budget of \$48,000 for the fiscal year, 1916-17. We ask approval of a budget for the same amount for the year 1917-18, and submit below a budget in detail.

Salaries and expenses of Field Workers and Superintendent	\$25,000
Donation of S. S. Literature, Libraries, etc.	15,000
Printed matter for Education Institutes, Conferences, etc.	4,500
Young People and Brotherhood	1,000
Total	\$48,000

Family Altar League.

The last Assembly directed our Committee to co-operate with the Assembly's Committee on the Sabbath and Family Religion, in presenting a working program to the Church. After consultation with the Chairman of this Committee, it was decided to make a definite effort to arouse a new interest in the vital matter of re-establishing the Family Altar in the homes of our Church. The Week of Prayer in January was selected as the time for presenting this plan. The program provided for a presentation in concise form, of the work of the four Executive Committees of the Assembly, one evening being devoted to each. Wednesday evening was reserved for the presentation of the importance of establishing Family Altars and a special program was printed for this service. Covenant cards were prepared for the signatures of all those who would agree to erect a Family Altar, and it was proposed

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